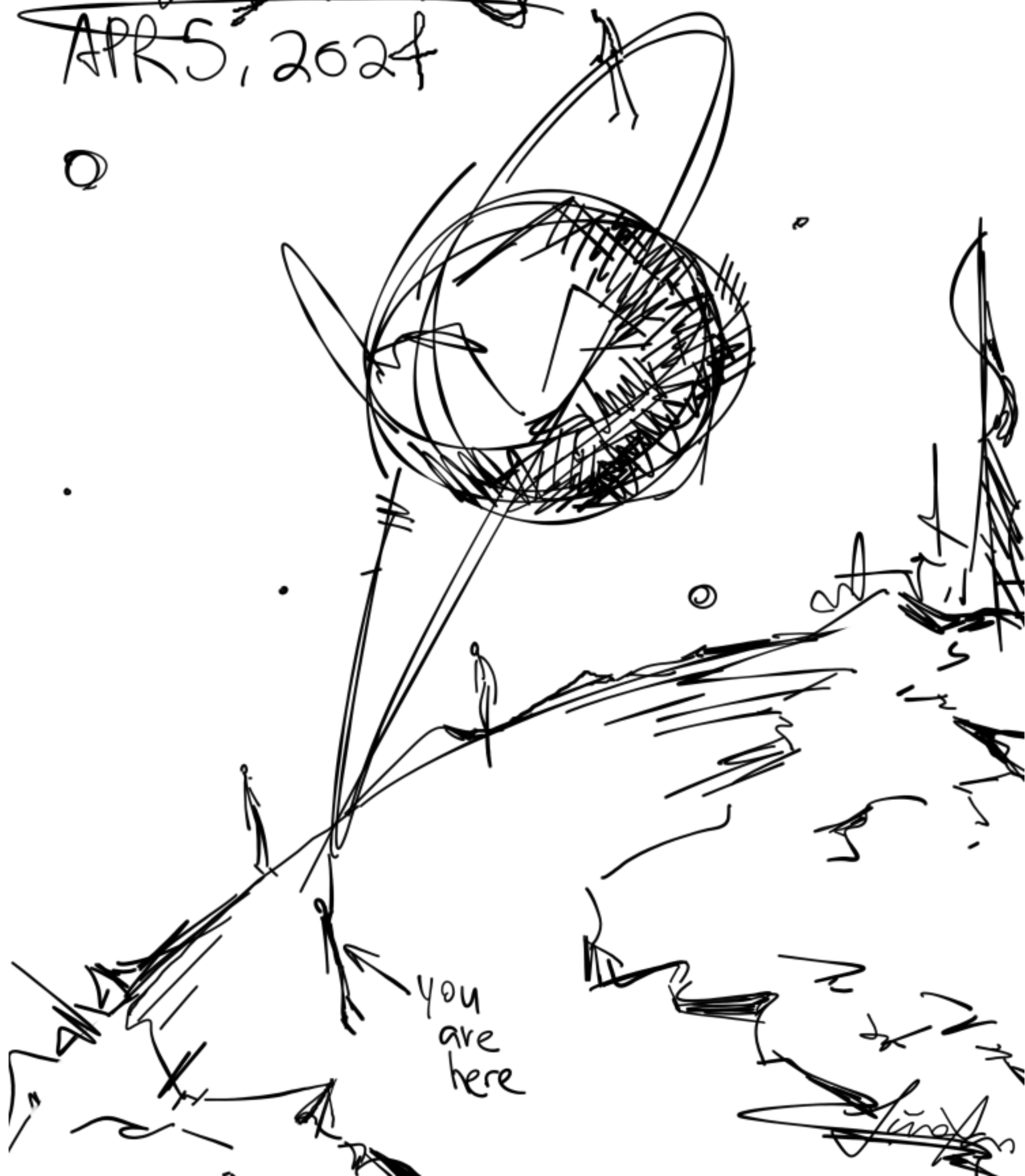


V59E4
~~THE INNISHERALD~~
APR 5, 2024





V59E4 2023-24
The Innis Herald
Masthead

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THE INNIS HERALD WISHES TO ACKNOWLEDGE THIS LAND ON WHICH THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO AND INNIS COLLEGE OPERATES. FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS IT HAS BEEN THE TRADITIONAL LAND OF THE HURON-WENDAT, THE SENECA, AND THE MISSISSAUGAS OF THE CREDIT. TODAY, THIS MEETING PLACE IS STILL THE HOME TO MANY INDIGENOUS PEOPLE FROM ACROSS TURTLE ISLAND AND WE ARE GRATEFUL TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK ON THE LAND OF TKARONTO.

Letter From the Editor

Sam Guevara
EDITORIAL

dear readers,

alright... let’s do this one last time. my name is Samantha “Sam” Guevara. I was elected by the Innis Herald community, and for the past year, I’ve been the one and only Editor-in-Chief. as I write this final letter as the editor, I grapple with a range of thoughts from nostalgia to gratitude while I reminisce about all the memorable moments that happened this term, Herald and beyond. whether it be that time my TA from first-year asked me out at Robarts, or the star drink at the Herald Speakeasy night being ‘Sam’s Hair.’ (don’t worry - my hair was not an ingredient nor the taste inspiration, the name was simply a callout for my constant hair dyeing.) this term has been an eventful experience and positively so.

being a publisher has been fulfilling, and I would say this publication was pretty successful. I assume the lack of hate mail I received would agree (although, that would have made great content). in other words, I had the experience of a lifetime creating content and talking tremendously over the past four editions of Volume 59. this role has been both a privilege and a joy, and I hope you found pleasure in your role as a reader. student voice and personal expression is so important and this opportunity reminded me of that everyday.

to close our journalistic voyage and my final letter, I want to shout out the creative contributors, the radiant readers, and the magnificent masthead (who tolerated my daily 2am texts in our group chat). big shout out to the next cult leader and incoming EIC who is... no other than me... again. the Herald will be back and so better. as always, hot people read the Herald, hotter people contribute to the Herald, and the hottest people run the Herald.

sincerely, sam

The Innis Mosaic

In the 70s, the Mosaic was a way for the Herald community to share their thoughts or stories across the college and campus from confessions to updates, if not bar recommendations.
As of 2024, here is what we have to say:

- A: “Is that the Varsity?” B: “No, it can’t be, it’s so cute!” C: “Ooh the Herald”
- “And these are my party glasses” proceeds to pick up the dustiest pair of glasses ever “They haven’t been used in a while”
- Shoutout to my fellow Hozier lesbians!!! - K
- I wish UofT had a way to minor in barbering. It’d be a great practical skill if I get bored of Sociology - Augustine
- I have a physiology minor, but I got that by accident
- A few days ago, a pair of Canada geese flew overhead and I couldn’t help but be reminded of a procession of clown cars
- I love downtown so much, this residence doesn’t feel downtown enough. How much rent is a cardboard box?
- Robarts is a different plane of existence after 12. I saw a guy wearing Apple Goggles just clicking his fingers staring off into space. We’re in the dystopia
- Overheard at Myhal: “This prof is so cool, she has 100,000 citations and an h-index of 104” “Oh yeah? I have way more Genshin 5-star pulls than her”
- Overheard at Innis College: “I watched Interstellar, when it first came out, left the hall and immediately went into labour”
- A growing list of things I said or heard during my reading week trip: 1. Oh... I hope you only have scurvy? 2. Please don’t eat my hair again 3. Maybe I do understand cannibalism 4. I love alcohol in the morning 5. My dignity is worth nothing in the presence of actual money - Lina
- A conversation between the Herald copyeditors: Rick: “Focus on freeze peach” Kiran: “Me when it’s hot outside and I’m paying attention to the fruit I stuck in the freezer”
- A professor explains how to fill out a worksheet (she obviously thinks her students are the dumbest people alive). 2 students in the back: #1 (lesbian): ok I might be a freak for saying this, but the condescension? It’s kind of hot, right? #2 (straight guy): oh man, it’s so hot.



The 2023-24 NBA Playoffs Are Coming. Are You Ready?

Julian Apolinario SPORTS

The past few years of NBA basketball have heralded change. The dynasties of the 2000s and 2010s—Spurs, Lakers, Warriors, and Heat—have faded from glory. The stars of decades past are reaching their final years in the league. So, if everything is different, what does that mean for the upcoming playoffs? What does that mean for us as the viewers? Of course, LeBron James is still playing—his career has outlasted three presidents—but it can be hard to constantly keep up with every new player, team, or big win that comes out of the league. The Herald is here to bring you up to speed on the guys who look like big winners, with a healthy dose of personal opinion. What’s sports journalism without plenty of that?

As an asterisk, I will note that it is impossible to constantly update a single written article with all the latest news, as the cycle happens so quickly. Those who are on top this week might be toppled by injuries or losing streaks in the next. Generally, however, I’ll try to summarize who’s been on top, and who will more than likely stay there.

Quickly, for the basketball-uninitiated: the NBA Playoffs have the top 8 teams from each coast play one another, Eastern Conference vs. Eastern Conference and Western Conference vs. Western Conference, until both East and West have battled things out, and one team remains from each coast. Those two teams come together to play in the Finals, a best of 7 series where the first team to win four games is crowned the NBA Champion! Cool? Cool.

The Eastern Conference

It’s important that we look first and foremost at the Boston Celtics. The Celtics have historically been a great team, and their 2023-24 roster is no exception; they haven’t won the most games in the league by signing incompetents. Super talented with great size and shooting ability, the Celtics are led by young stars Jayson Tatum and Jaylen Brown, who are backed up by extremely formidable players in other aspects. Recent acquisitions of Latvian giant Kristaps Porzingis and shooter-defender Jrue Holiday round out the team even more. Having personally observed the effects of Holiday’s shooting during a Raptors’ home game this January, let me be the first to say that I would not be looking forward to contending with the boys from Boston.

The Bucks are similar. Having won recently in 2021, Milwaukee is a mean looking team led by larger than life personalities: Giannis Antetokounmpo looks like a Greek Shaquille O’Neal, and Damian “Dame Time” Lillard is making clutch shots and providing a veteran presence. These guys are gunning for a championship. Acquiring Lillard is this season’s big change for the Bucks, as the star had been languishing in Portland before Milwaukee brought him to a championship team. To get Dame, they notably had to give up Jrue Holiday to the Celtics, something that they may come to regret if they are to play Boston in the playoffs. After losing in the first round of the playoffs last year to an upstart Miami Heat team, all eyes should be on the Bucks. Speaking of, you can never rule out the Heat! The

boys from South Beach are scrappy, having defied all odds and taken down both the Celtics and Bucks last year. Led by Jimmy Butler—a part-time emo fan, full time basketball monster—Butler earned his nickname “Playoff Jimmy” for his intensity in the postseason. He played so well last year that rumors began to circulate that he was in fact Michael Jordan’s illegitimate Texan son. Despite being ranked as the lowly eighth seed this year, you can never say never about Miami until Butler and Co. have hung up their shorts.

The Western Conference

What makes the West fun this year is how chaotic it is. While the Eastern Conference is solidly ruled by the Boston Celtics, the west could truly be anyone’s turf. As for teams to look out for this year, look no further than the Denver Nuggets, last year’s champs. The Nuggets haven’t changed up their roster much in the past year, but hey, don’t fix what isn’t broken. Led by a master scorer and facilitator in Serbian centre Nikola Jokić, the Nuggets are a dangerous team. Jokić, “The Joker,” is backed up by great players in Canadian point guard Jamal Murray and Michael Porter Junior, a deadly shooter. Jokić himself is a force to be reckoned with, however. The Nuggets dismantled the Heat in last year’s Finals, winning the Championship in just 5 games. Nothing about this year makes me believe that they could not do it again.

Moving further west, let’s consider the Los Angeles Clippers. Perpetually in the shadow of their big brother, the Los Angeles Lakers, the Clippers have reached a climax as a franchise. The Clips assembled perhaps their greatest team ever, bringing together a “who’s who” of ballers for this year’s roster. If you were in Toronto in 2019, you remember the effect of Kawhi “Klaw” Leonard only too well. After his championship-winning stint with the Raptors, Leonard moved to Los Angeles and now acts as the centerpiece of the Clippers’ roster. As a two-time world champion and two-time Finals MVP, adding another championship to Kawhi’s name would elevate him to the status of a truly generational player. Alongside him are former MVPs James Harden and Russel Westbrook, formidable scorers in their own right, as well as veteran player Paul George.

Finally for the west, we can’t forget about the Oklahoma City Thunder. Led by another Canadian, the pride of Burlington, Shai Gilgeous-Alexander is a force to be reckoned with. Putting up more than 30 points per game, Alexander draws attention on and off the court with dazzling performances bolstered by a strong social media presence. Backing him up is a young core, most prominently rookie Chet Holmgren. Thanks to Holmgren’s uncanny appearance, NBA fans have gotten a view of what it would look like if Abe Lincoln put down the hat and picked up a jersey. The youthful centre is a widely liked player, at one point having head-ed talks to become Rookie of the Year.

Dreams and Predictions

Based on what I’ve said, you might assume that I believe the Celtics to be a shoo-in to knock out all of their Eastern Conference opponents. While this year’s Boston team is spectacular, they are not infallible. Last year, the Heat took out the Celtics in a 7 game series, a gru-

eling matchup that saw the Celtics narrowly avoiding being swept in 4 games. While Taytum has gone to the Finals before, he lost to Steph Curry and the Warriors in 2022. The smart money is still on the Celtics to make it to the Finals thanks to their spectacular team this year, but I would not be surprised if someone managed to knock them out of contention. That force might come from the highly regarded veterans on the Bucks, the championship-starved New York Knicks, or even a repeat of last year’s Heat. Regardless of who metes it out, a loss would come as a powerful blow to the egos of Boston fans. Going to the Finals and winning, on the other hand, would help begin raising the legendary franchise back to its once unparalleled heights. Personally, I would be very happy to see Giannis, Dame, and the rest of the Bucks make it to the Finals again. An overperforming Miami team was demolished by the Nuggets last year, and as much as I loved their Cinderella story, I want the East to send a team of proven winners to face the assuredly potent Western Conference Champions, whoever they might be.

In regards to the West, there is a strong difference between what I would like to happen, and what I think will happen. This year, the Clippers have well and truly won my hearts. I see the Clippers as a team that can validate the legacies of some of the NBA’s greatest stars of the 2010s. Westbrook and Harden managed to win MVPs, and Paul George always played at a high level, but neither of the three stars ever managed to win a championship. The 2010s was very much an era of dominance for a couple of teams, meaning lots of spectacular players never got their flowers from Finals wins. This year could mean the difference between three of the greatest players of our generation being remembered as winners or losers forever. To do so, however, the Clippers would have to make their way through the stone wall that is the Nuggets, and avoid any nasty surprises from an otherwise loaded Western Conference. The Thunder are led by an MVP candidate in Shai, the Timberwolves have spectacular players even after the injury of their star power forward Karl-Anthony Towns, and on the part of the Lakers, LeBron James is still LeBron James. Getting out of the West will not be easy.

Whether it’s the Celtics’ return to dominance or the stalwart veterans on the Clippers, the high-flying acrobatics of young players or the grizzled toughness of the old, it pleases me to see the passion and care these players put into the game of basketball day in, and day out. A league this full of talent is something we should not take for granted as viewers; if you’re only now starting to tune in, you’re at a moment of “blink and you’ll miss it.” Rookie Victor Wembanyama is a sensation who will win championships for years to come. The Warriors Dynasty may soon unravel, much like Michael Jordan’s Chicago Bulls of the 1990s. LeBron James may soon retire, bringing a career that’s spanned three decades to an end.

A lot is happening now, but it’s up to us to keep up.



Green Eggs and Biochem

Yash Kumar Singhal
SCIENCE

So the other day, I was making breakfast, right? I was scrambling some eggs, with a bit of butter and some pepper, when I thought, eh, might as well add some veggies to this, make it a bit more healthy to balance out that poutine I plan on eating later in the day. So I checked the fridge and pulled out some beautiful red cabbage that I had bought at Kensington Fruit Market (best produce near campus, highly recommended). I chopped some of it up, mixed it with my eggs, let it sauté for a bit and SUDDENLY my eggs were green. “What in the Dr. Seuss...” I thought. Being the academic weapon and incessant researcher I am, I promptly opened up Google and sent my question out into the void that is the internet. “Why did my red cabbage turn my yellow eggs green,” I asked, and within seconds the answer echoed back: anthocyanins.

Red cabbage gets its colour from a fascinating group of naturally occurring pigment molecules known as anthocyanins. These are made up of three rings of six carbons each with all sorts of fun side groups hanging off their ends. The cool part is that this complex chemistry allows a mixture of anthocyanins to react to the pH of their environment in an amazingly artistic manner: pH, for those of you who have blocked out the traumatic memory that was high school Chemistry, is the way we measure the acidity or alkalinity of a substance on a scale of 1 to 14. Anthocyanins have a variety of structures that react to light differently and thus show up as a range of colours. As the pH of a solution changes, one structure may become more stable than another and would dominate the overall colour we see.

Acidic lemon juice has a pH between 2-4, so when anthocyanins are introduced to a bit of citrus, they turn pinkish-red. Egg whites on the other hand, are one of few food items that are naturally slightly alkaline with a pH around 8-9. When met with this environment, the anthocyanins in red cabbage take on a bit of a blue-ish hue. Mix that with the yellow from the egg yolk and you get, as any primary grade art student will tell you, green!

Ranging from ruby reds to perfect pinks, pretty purples and even brilliant blues, this class of pigments is responsible for the colourful patterns on petals of flowers like red roses, hibiscus, blue cornflowers, lavender

flowers, or violets. These designs help attract all sorts of pollinators to the flowers, helping the plant reproduce.

Some of the warm reds of autumn can also be attributed to anthocyanins. When the green chlorophyll is being degraded and recycled to prepare for winter, some plants fill their leaves with these anthocyanins. Here, and in many coloured fruits like grapes or blueberries, the pigment acts as a natural sunscreen protecting the plant from the harsh UV radiation in the incoming sunlight.

Anthocyanins have yet another crucial role in the plant cell, reducing oxidative stress. The plant’s proteins and biochemistry are working hard to capture and use the energy from the sun to make... more plant. In the same way that a car engine gives off excess heat and harmful side products, this cellular machinery produces ‘reactive oxygen species,’ waste molecules that move around the cell reacting with everything they bump into. Imagine a 6 year-old throwing a tantrum at the grocery store, rampaging around the shop knocking over towers of fruit and bumping into people. What do you do? You buy a lollipop and hand it to the child. That is exactly what anthocyanin does. It gives the ROS one of its electrons, returns it to a less reactive state, and sends it on its merry way. This is why antioxidants are great, and eating food rich in anthocyanins (many fresh fruits and veggies) may be really beneficial!

Looking for a way to incorporate more anthocyanins in your diet? Or hoping to wow your friends with a wondrous culinary magic trick? Perhaps you just want to relive the electric night that was the Innis Herald Speakeasy where the charming bartender made you one of his signature cocktails... what was it called... ah yes, “Eau de Sam’s Hair.” Well, you’re in luck, because for making it all the way through that heavy scientific article, you get a little reward: my not-so-secret recipe for a colour changing lemonade!

For 1 litre of lemonade you will need:

- 1/3 of a purple cabbage cut into thin strips
- 3/4 cup of sugar
- 4-5 Lemons worth of juice
- 1 litre of water
- And a smidgen of bartender’s flair

Bring the water to a boil, either in a kettle or on the stove. Then turn the heat off and introduce the cabbage to the water. Stir well so you can extract all those water soluble anthocyanins. Once the water has cooled completely, strain out the cabbage (collect the water). Admire the beautiful purple hue of the cabbage water then add in your sugar and stir till dissolved. You can use the leftover boiled cabbage in all sorts of dishes (omelettes, wraps, soups, fried rice, or whatever you want).

When you are ready to serve your guests, fill a fancy glass with a bit of ice, pour in the purple potion till about 3/4th the way up then add a quarter shot (about a tablespoons worth) of lemon juice. Stir gracefully and watch the drink go from purple to pink in front of your eyes as your audience erupts into oohs and ahhs. Top it off with a lemon slice and voilà! You’ve just made your first biochemistry powered magic potion.





Op-Ed: Innis Town Hall Doing More for Toronto than City Council

Boundary News
SATIRE/COLUMN

Innis Town Hall is already the centre of U of T’s cinephilic community. There can be no doubt that it has what it takes to be the centre of a whole lot more. Despite the fact that its name reeks of municipal authority, the institution does not have any say in the governance of Toronto. This, if you ask me, is where Hogtown has gone horribly wrong.

Town Hall, which receives daily letters about late garbage pickups on Lippincott St and raucous parties on Huron, should accept its fate and take on the responsibilities of civic administration. The time has come to move beyond film screenings. It is my contention that the sublime cinema should be playing an active role not only in perpetuating the cult of Sergei Eisenstein, but also in infrastructure, sanitation, and pest control.

Without so much as a hiccup, the subsidiary of Innis College could easily surpass the legislative capacity of City Hall. Excluding coffee breaks and closed door meetings with developers, City Council’s productivity rivals only that of Sisyphus. All the while, Mayor Chow, an idol for aspiring bureaucrats the world over, has been tackling homelessness with the pep of a plastered sloth.

For those foolhardy dissenters who still refuse to see the light, I pray you consider this. Surely you must admit that what the

Town Hall lacks in policy know-how and democratic legitimacy, it makes up for with its Christie CP4220 projector, Dolby sound processing, and QSC DCS Cinema speakers. Not to mention, if we don’t vest the cinema with municipal jurisdiction soon, it’s only a matter of time before it becomes a Cineplex.



My dear roommate _____,

This school year would have been very different without you by my side. I think fondly of our first adventure, when we _____. However, I am considering our future, and I’ve come to request that you never, EVER room with me again.

Over the past 8 months, you have committed the following transgressions:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Not cleaning your space</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Fucking my _____</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Not cleaning my space</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Being awake at __ am/pm</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Stealing my shit</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Leaving the milk out</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Assorted food crimes</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Thermostat crimes</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Arson</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Trying to kill me</i>

As a result, while I wish you a [wonderful/mediocre/terrible] year, I cannot continue living with you.

[All the best/fuck off and die],

Innis Herald MadLibs #4



Noodles, but in a Better Way!

John Wright
RECIPE

Trying to satiate your hunger in university is hard! Between juggling classes, studying, social life, a job, etc., it can be really hard to make time for a meal that could actually be considered proper food. For many of us, it's impossible to count the number of ramen packets we've cracked open over this past year.

Why not throw away the sodium overload and try something else? Still quick and easy – and still noodles – this recipe for peanut butter soba noodles won't only fill you up but will give you some nutrition to boot!

In total, this recipe should only take around 20 minutes of your time, as you can do prep and cooking within the same time.

For this recipe you'll need:

- 1 bundle of soba noodles* (the packs at the store usually have preset portions of 100g each, enough for 1-2 people)
- 1 cup baby spinach (optional)
- 1 cup frozen mixed vegetables (optional)
- ½ cup sliced mushrooms (optional)
- Sauce
- 3 tbsp peanut butter
- ~1 tsp grated or minced ginger
- 1 clove garlic, grated**
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tbsp rice vinegar
- ½ tsp white pepper (substitute with black pepper if you don't have this)
- Pinch of salt
- Garnishes
- 1 green onion, sliced
- 1 thai green chili pepper, sliced (optional)

This recipe is super customizable and you can adjust the ingredients to your heart's delight. The most important part is the sauce, which is the base of the whole dish. Sub the veggies and garnishes for any of your favourites (do add vegetables though, you need your nutrients!). What I use here is just what I usually have in my fridge and freezer.

Cooking steps:

1. Bring a pot of water to a boil over high heat
2. Wash and prepare any vegetables being cooked with the noodles

3. Prepare your sauce: combine all ingredients listed for the sauce and mix until a smooth consistency is achieved (it will look way too thick but we'll fix it later)
4. Once your water is boiling, add noodles and vegetables*** to the pot. DO NOT add the spinach until the last minute of cooking! Cook noodles according to package directions, usually 3 minutes.
5. While cooking, add some noodle water to the peanut sauce to help loosen the consistency
6. In the last minute of cooking, add your spinach to quickly blanch it before serving
7. Once noodles and vegetables are cooked, drain and toss with sauce
8. Plate the noodles (or don't) and top with green onion and chili

Serve and enjoy! I find these noodles are best served warm.

Recipe notes:

* You can really use any type of noodles for this recipe, soba is just a more nutritionally complex alternative to wheat-based noodles. Use instant noodles if you must, but leave out the seasoning packet.

** Grating the garlic ensures the best flavour and consistency.

*** I boil the vegetables with the noodles to save time. If you have more time you can pan fry the vegetables, which will add more flavour to the dish.





Dear Noah

Miel Pham

PERSONAL ESSAY

Dear Noah,

Lately there's been a lot on my mind. I've been thinking about you and love and truth and hate. Even though you won't read this, I thought it would be easier to unscramble my thoughts if I were writing to you, the first person I could call my best friend.

I was on my usual mindless morning walk to class, sunglasses on and AirPods in, when Spotify played this song you shared with me the summer before uni:

*Do you remember our first date?
Went to the Gardens by the bay
It's past a year now since that day
It's such a long time since you've been away
I'd be lying if I said I was okay*

It used to be on a long list of songs that I'd immediately skip, since they reminded me of you, and ever since the Confession, these songs have been ruined—stripped of their magic and painted with splatters of heartache. But that day I didn't even think to skip. My lips eased into a soft smile as I drifted warmly down the alley; all the love I had for you washed over me, waves of cool flames undulating with the melody, leaving behind just me and this song and the glow of the memories of how I used to feel about you. I was over you.

I never told you my half of the Confession. Not fully. It goes back to last summer when we went to see that musical. It was the first time I'd seen you in quite some time, so I dressed to impress, hoping that I could still be yours That maybe your new friend—Mina, the one you would mention in every single one of our conversations—was just a friend. We travelled back after the show, and there we sat side by side, like we always would, this time on the 505, but you ignored me in favour of your phone, opting instead to hang onto every text she sent you, never once turning my way. And it broke my heart. I knew you, and I wasn't stupid; not too deep down, I always knew that you didn't reciprocate my feelings, though it was only then that I was convinced, for I saw that she was special to you in the way that you were special to me.

That could've been the end of it. But the following four days drove me insane, my mind only ever filling with thoughts of you and her and how I wanted you to be with someone who was actually good and competent and kind and funny and pretty and deserving of love. A Confession was the only way to move on. I told you how I felt about you, and then I told you what I told myself, that I needed to be

upfront because keeping this a secret kept me stuck.

What I didn't tell you, because it wasn't your burden to carry, was that I didn't deserve you, so even if you did feel the same way, I would only ever hold you back. What I did say was that Mina was clearly someone special to you, and so I encouraged you to go for it. What I didn't tell you was that I didn't want you to end up where I was, clinging onto the hope of a relationship with a friend who didn't reciprocate my feelings. What I did say was that I needed some time away from you, to help me move on, and that maybe after that, we could go back to being friends—the best of friends. What I didn't tell you was that I wasn't sure if we could ever go back and be like we always were.

A month became two months which became a whole year and it just kept going. I no longer had a space for you in my life, but you, without trying, took up space anyway. I held off on connecting with someone in the way I did with you, wanting never to risk feeling again the way I felt around you, all hopeless and insecure and desperate for your attention.

But that day in the alley turned the Confession into a mere confession. My memories with you didn't ruin the song; instead, they embedded themselves within the melody, a fragment of the long beautiful narrative that made me me. Spotify's autoplay feature showed me I was ready to move on, and it happened just in time for the amazing someone who popped into my life.

I met Kat last year, actually. She messaged me after noticing our shared interest in bikes, and we tried to make plans numerous times, but something always came up. Even so, we were always sort of hovering at the outskirts of each other's lives. We almost did lose touch, but one day I thought I'd try to reconnect. And we did. Finally we went on these walks, just us two, and spoke for a few hours about school and family and interests and music and more. And I had so much fun. I adored her and I tried to be realistic and cool, but everything she said made me think she was even cooler and left me even fonder of her. It's special to meet someone who likes all these same things you do, who's lived this life in many ways mirroring yours, and who gets you, whom you really like, and who is perhaps just as amazed by you as you are by them. It felt like it was meant to be. During all this I thought back to that streetcar ride. If what you felt with Mina was at all like the chemistry I felt with Kat, I understand wholly why Mina stole your attention that night.

Eventually, I asked Kat out and it was a maybe ... and then it was a no. Her life was busy enough without the mental weight of dating, too. Still, I felt so comfortable and peaceful and joyful whenever we spoke. I couldn't shake this feeling that there could still be a future where we would date and even perhaps end up together. With everything else having aligned so neatly, I could not get over the fact that the timing just didn't work out.

And so I was stuck, ceaselessly obsessing, analyzing, and debating with myself whether there was anything I could've done differently or if, had I simply been funnier, smarter, and prettier, she might instead have decided that dating was worth it if it was me. Romance derailed my life again.

It took a few weeks with (almost) no contact with Kat for me to return to my most functional self, boring and predictable but functioning. For the first time in months, the chatter stopped and all in my mind was crystal clear.

This newfound lucidity uncovered some sad truths previously shrouded in brain fog:

I don't like myself. I'm not interesting or intelligent. I'm irresponsible and lazy. I've never worked for anything I have. I'm not likeable, let alone loveable. I don't deserve anything good.

And everything made sense. This is why I avoid competition, always afraid of not measuring up. It's why I give up when writing applications, refusing myself before anyone else has the chance. It's why I could never go to grad school. And it must be why romance disturbs my peace so profoundly, every interaction putting me at risk of rejection. So I don't try—at anything—because I'm afraid that the world will just confirm what I already know: that I am the worst and simply never could deserve those good things.

I guess all this was never really about you or Kat. I still adore Kat, but her decision not to go out with me was, by chance, what was also best for me. Forget self love; I don't like myself, and I won't be able to live a fulfilling life until I do. So here's a new Confession, from me to myself: I have a lot of growing to do before I'm ever able to handle a relationship. Now I know what I need to do. And thank you, Noah, for listening and helping me unscramble all these thoughts and ... for being the first person I could call my best friend.

Miel



A Quiet Daydream

A.W. Jenkins

SHORT STORY

“Do you think it’ll stay this warm through the week?”

The young woman turned to meet, as she believed, the gaze of her male acquaintance, as he lay on the grassy hill beside her. Instead, she found him staring off into the brook below, his eyes fixated on how the water rushed white over a particular patch of stones.

“I don’t believe today is much warmer than yesterday,” she replied, “except that the sun is out now, and it makes us feel warm.”

At this response, he finally turned back to face her with an air of confusion.

“Is that not...”

The shape of the boy’s face, furrowed and tense, told clearly his intention to argue this point. But upon finding the eye of his old friend, and feeling the warmth of a stray sunbeam on his tightened brow, he seemed to lose any motivation to do so.

“... that makes sense enough.”

At this admission, the two rolled back in tandem and turned their vision toward the sky.

“Do you remember, Melanie,” the boy suddenly blurted out, “when we would point out shapes in the clouds together?”

“I do.”

And so the two returned to their silence, with their eyes still fixed on the clouds. Both of them looked for something there—an elephant, an umbrella, the old schoolhouse—but found only white vastness. The best image either of them could come up with was a pillow, or a dollop of whipped cream.

This silent rumination continued for a while, as each of them chewed on their thoughts. Both of them wished to speak; they had more to say to one another than they had time to say it. But the weight of silence can be overwhelming at times, and neither of the two had enough strength or willpower to push it away. Instead, both of them took this a chance to soak in the familiar sounds of this landscape. The treeline shook with wind, much to the agitation of the many birds about them, who chirped their resignation for the weather to each other as they bounced back and forth between branches. The side of the hill the two had chosen to lay down on faced towards the brook, meaning neither of them could feel the cold chill of this April breeze. They heard it, though, and felt it deeply in their hearts.

The silence was suddenly broken after a length of time neither of the two could have recalled, when the boy pulled himself from the grass and shuffled downhill to the water’s edge without a word. Taking a rounded stone from under the surface and holding it between his fingers, he cast it into the bushes beneath the trees in a swift motion. The rustling of leaves and crying of birds that followed seemed to pull young Melanie from her waking sleep.

“It is nice to be together again, William. Life has been moving too fast lately, and it feels like I never get a chance to catch my breath.”

The boy held onto these words for a moment. His amber eyes were still locked to the stream beneath him, following the movement of a half-snapped twig across the face of the water.

“It is.”

This half-thought response brought the two back into a lull of silence. This time, though, it lasted no longer than a minute. Melanie rose at this point from her seat on the hill and carefully made her way to the side of William, who met her arrival with a cursory glance. He decided, after a few long moments, to break the silence once again; this time, though, his voice seemed much less resolute.

“I’m not sure why, but the sun is shining so brightly today, and yet I don’t feel warm at all. I wonder what that means?”

Melanie’s head lowered with her gaze toward the sound of rushing water. She couldn’t see his face, but she felt his half-smile through the broken tone of his words.

“Oh no, William... you shouldn’t say things like that. It’s such a beautiful day today.”

“I’m sorry, you’re right,” he admitted with a sigh. “It’s just that, you being here is making me miss how it used to be, Mel. When I could wake up in the morning and know for a fact that you would be around. I was so happy then. And I am happy now, sometimes, I suppose, but I haven’t been lost in the sound of my own laughter in such a long time.”

Melanie had nothing to say. Her previous drive to break the silence between them now waned in strength, and her heart, though beating still, was far too fragile to handle the sight of her oldest friend in such a troubled state. From this moment on the two both held their breath, sitting with one another in quiet consideration. Each hoped to find some words, to pull a sharp sentence out from the recesses of their mind that might cut through the tension they had brought upon themselves through their tendency to wait and watch. But they couldn’t. Not like they used to.

The wind was still now. Above them, in the trees, the birds had returned to their usual song and dance. Both of them knew that soon they would have to do the same, but there was a certain satisfaction in holding onto a fleeting feeling with another, knowing every passing moment could be the last you got to spend with them. Even moments like this could be pleasant—moments filled with such straining, invasive emotions—when you spent them with someone who you’d rather have held onto, at least for a few more minutes.

A few more minutes. It had been that long, hadn’t it? Neither of the two would have known—not until the sound of rolling wheels on well-tread dirt brought them each back into the world. Melanie looked upwards into the sky, glancing past the clouds to catch how far the sun had crept across the horizon since she’d left for the river; William, instead, only looked into Melanie’s eyes, but found in them everything he needed to know. She rose in an instant, adjusting her hat and turning to face him.

“I need to go. My mother will be expecting me early tonight.”

Melanie turned in place and took several steps up the hill. But she couldn’t bear to leave him like this, and after some moments had passed, twisted back to see her Will one last time.

“I hope we can meet again, someday. Under less painful circumstances than this.”

Then, silence.

And he was alone.

You wouldn’t think so, though, if you had been there. Yes, he was by himself—but the sounds of the world around him continued on without regard. The mood of the place, in fact, had hardly changed. This seemed to sooth his pain, or at the very least keep him distracted for a time. Ignoring his own mind, William leaned over onto the bank to drown out his thoughts in the overwhelming sound of rushing water. But this was futile—he knew it was futile. He could get lost in the rhythm of it, at least for a while. After some time alone with his thoughts, though, the intensity of them wore off enough that he could trust himself to mull them over. And so, pulling his weight from the ground, William allowed himself to feel. He looked around—up and down the treeline, and to the horizon beyond them—and felt another, more powerful wave of emotion surge through his heart.

The world around him was alive! Of course, he knew that this was true all along. At no point had it died—but for William, whose entire idea of this place was based around a set of now-sour memories from his youth, it seemed that the old brook couldn’t exist without Melanie laying in the grass beside it. And yet, there it was: there were the towering oaks, and the lonely birch tree with its stripping bark, carved over in words of youth; there were the songbirds on their branches, hopping along with a tune between them; there lay that fallen log across the water, peppered on every side with little white mushrooms—all the same, and all accounted for, without change or consideration. And there he was—just as he had been the day before—standing beside them, lost in a quiet daydream.



Past

A.W. Jenkins

POETRY

bag in hand, i make my way downtown
past the posters of young folks eating fresh
draped on the window of a foreclosed room
“we’ll see you soon!” they say;
past an ever-busy restaurant after six,
where two men dot the rooftop with their tools.

i carry myself along the wide-sided walk
past the spot i watched my streetcar cross
and tried, in vain, to catch;
past the mass of eager transit-goers waiting for the
next,
whose commitment i respect
and laugh at as i walk along.

crossing down the food-truck street now
i glance around at restaurants past the way,
whose food i don’t believe i’ll ever taste;
past the slower students on my walk
who seem to have no place to go at all
coming now to where i need to be.

tired, now, and five hours older
i recount my way back along those same streets
and make it to the car this time, in time;
back out onto the street now, i watch the crowd
march by
past the hand-made signs beside the ones from some
store online
and note how loud we can sound with a soul inside.

and now i turn the corner, past a happy huddle of
friends
past that ever-busy restaurant and the fleet of boys-
on-bikes
prepared to ferry food across city streets, and i con-
tinue on
(i wonder what he eats before he sleeps at home?)
past the man puffing smoke between his fingers
and the smell that lingers on after he goes
until i find myself back where i began,
bag in hand;
and then i get to work.

Stardust Serenade

Tahir Ahsan Soumen

POETRY

In the faraway nightscape,
where the stars make funny shapes
I somehow see you clearly,
even on the cloudiest nights
Eighty-eight constellations,
and yours is the only one that
I can map without my glasses,
for it is etched into each beat of my heart
and the only shape
that puts a wholehearted smile on my face
And as the Moon cycles,
only when it blooms to its fullest form
is the only time I can see myself right beside you
So let the stars amuse us,
as the mysteries of the night confine us
in tandem, our souls orbit

we sing our serenade.



Conversation with my past love

Devika Gopakumar
POETRY

My love, tell me why
you will not speak of
the dead brown children
in Gaza tonight

Do you, not mourn me
As I wade through,
The lost words of all
my slaughtered poets

Do you, not dream of
Flour bags, drenched in blood
Bombed cities, in your lungs
Clear skies, raining ash
Your leaders, stagnant words
Your friend's, silences
My Jaan, will you not
weep with me
As all our, ancient towns
And once our, Father's homes
are exiled, to the wind
and scattered, with the dust

Do you, not feel that
All the water
In this broken world,
Will not wash away
the wounds of our
Butchered children
Tell me now, past love
how many,
weeping Hind's*, will it take
Till you, dream of
Flour bags, drenched in blood
Bombed cities, in your lungs
Clear skies, raining ash
Our leaders, stagnant words
Our friend's, blind eye
Did you hear, lost friend
Bisan, flew a kite
in Palestine today

Do you think, that the
missing kites of our
Fallen children,
Will make their way
to our shores, one day

My love, I fear that
We have too much blood
on our hands today that
we can not wash away
And all our, unsaid words
and all our, silences
Drenched those flour bags
in Gaza, today

**HIND RAJAB: HIND RAJAB WAS A FIVE-YEAR-OLD
PALESTINIAN GIRL FROM THE TEL AL-HAWA
NEIGHBOURHOOD IN GAZA CITY WHO WAS KILLED
BY THE ISRAELI MILITARY, AFTER BEING THE SOLE
SURVIVOR OF ISRAELI TANK FIRE ON THE VEHICLE
SHE FLED IN WITH SIX RELATIVES.*



I Know The Love Is There Because I Was Able To Find It

Red PERSONAL ESSAY

My mother used to take me to the ROM when I was younger. I had a fascination with all manners of fauna, but especially the prehistoric. She tells me now that it was an hour and a half trip on the train from our GTA suburb, and I would spend ages on the second floor, peering up at skeleton models and likely blasting her with words like carbon dating and Hadrosauridae. I've seen hundreds of photos of myself with dinosaur-related museum exhibits on the family desktop. I have little recollection of these ROM trips, but I certainly don't remember being born here, and so these forge my earliest memories of Toronto.

As I write this article, I'm in an independently owned coffee shop out on Yonge Street. It's one of my favorite spots I've discovered in this city. It's right down the street from the theater I was sitting in when my life changed. It's right up the street from the train station I used to step out of when Toronto felt like a stranger. Today is a beautiful day. It is almost the end of first year and I'm reflecting on how my perspective of this city has changed since September.

Toronto is a very residential city. She's young, approximately two hundred and thirty-one years old now. Compared to other metropolises such as NYC or London, she has a strange and rather convoluted transit system and a plethora of glass skyscrapers. If you see her from a distance, most of this glass reflects the sky. Her streets are wide and open, her cultural mosaic brimming and diverse. At the center of it is the University of Toronto—you might be familiar—established 1827. And here, hundreds of years later, you and I. Innis. Toronto. The world.

When I was a kid at the ROM, I wanted nothing more than to study vertebrate paleontology (this means extinct animals with backbones, of which dinosaurs are a category). This dream did not come true, and it had been associated so much with a particular university elsewhere on this continent that when I was not accepted, I left a dream of thirteen years and chose Toronto as my 'next best option.' I'm no god, nor do I believe in one, but something has led me to this city on purpose.

And so I completely abandoned my academic prospects for a while. I spent orientation week on foot, determined to map the entire core of the campus and city in my mind. To name every TTC station, every street downtown north to south and east to west. After that, it just didn't stop. I pelted through alleyways, I talked to strangers. I took the subway to a station I had no affiliation with and fully powered off my phone so the only way I'd ever make it home was through street signs and intuition. The CN Tower is always south, always watching over us. The L Tower is her eastern neighbor. The TD Canada Trust logo is visible from nearly anywhere, seated neatly between Bay St. and Front St. The list goes on. I made a playlist. I walked through miscellaneous residential neighborhoods to take notes on the architecture of different areas and how quiet it usually was for somewhere in the middle of downtown. I think I've spent more money on coffee (independently owned shops are everywhere here) this school year than I have in my entire life and regret none of it.

It was extremely strange living in a city I had never envisioned myself in before. I had gone through the application process, paid my residence fees, and told all of my friends where I was studying, but I never recall it feeling like a 'real' or 'final' decision. The first night of move-in, after my family had long left and my heart felt like it was going to burst from its seams with joy, I called my best friend, who had moved here a year earlier for his schooling, and we took a walk. We started at Innis Residence, and made our way down to the waterfront. We walked an entire stretch of Yonge Street, commenting on all the buildings, new and old. We passed the aforementioned coffee shop I'm writing this from. We passed the theater that my life had rearranged itself within.

I would like to highlight this building, too. Send the love from me to you. The CAA Ed Mirvish, down on Yonge Street. Have you seen her? A large red key-hole-shaped sign with lights that never seem to stop. This is a building constructed in 1920 and now owned by Mirvish Enterprises, the largest theater company not just in Canada, but on the continent. They operate four large venues here, and you see their advertising everywhere: Les Misérables releasing in May, The Lion King premiering this November.

I am certain this essay feels somewhat like a stream of consciousness and it is supposed to be. These pieces all tie together, I promise. Here are some things I have learned about Toronto that feel barely describable, but that I must stress to you.

One: Toronto is bursting with color. Everywhere. The beautiful soft blues of the skyscrapers, the tans and off-whites of older historical buildings. Yonge-Dundas is small but mighty, with billboards and lights. Warm browns and blacks and soft lighting adorn most small neighborhoods under cover of trees, such as Cabbagetown and The Annex. Chinatown boasts a fierce red, our University is navy and sky. There is a forever abundance of things to be discovered here. There is a feeling in the air of standing downtown, wanting to immortalize yourself in the moment. It is real. It is present. It is vibrant and alive.

Two: Toronto is ever-changing. Innis College is still under construction. King's College Circle has had most of the barriers taken down, and the grass has turned yellow and drab. The Real Fruit Bubble Tea by the ROM closed (they're replacing it with a Booster Juice, if anyone's interested). The plays in the theaters are ephemeral and it hurts whenever the signs on the front change. Cranes seem to come and go as they please, planes continue to take off and land. The weather fluctuates. The construction sites across King Street look a little more complete each time I take a look. Assignments whiz by, and I scramble date after date in my calendar, making every attempt to suck the marrow out of the city before I leave it. The semester changes. It might feel day by day like we as students are living in a routine, but the city around us is breathing, too.

Three: Toronto is mine. It's also yours. The city is what you make of it.

Four: You are able to stand at the heart of this city and say, "I love you". You are allowed to cry. You're becoming an adult and falling in love with the world again. It is all going to be okay.

Five: We are only students here for so long.

Back in the days when I went to the ROM with my mother, when paleontology felt like everything I had, and when university sounded like a place where magical things happened, I remember falling asleep in the backseat of the car headed home from school, and waking up in my childhood bed after spending the night at my friend's house. I was never able to recall the feeling of my mother's old Tuscon pulling into the driveway of our old place, nor the strength of presumably my father's arms carrying me up the stairs. But there I always was, the following morning, awake with the cooing of the morning doves outside my window and the summer sunlight casting patterns on the carpet floor, knowing I was home. It's nearing the end of first year and the house I refer to has become a stranger to me. Yet I feel this feeling again in my lungs and in the sidewalk cracks of downtown. In every way, I implore you to take this final stretch of semester and allow yourself to feel the city. Maybe you will find me out there somewhere. I'm still in that coffee shop on Yonge Street, watching people pass by. All I can feel is that I'm right where I'm supposed to be. I'm home. I'm home. I'm home. I'm home.



From Principles to Practice: The Surprising Reality of Free Speech at UofT

Kyle Newcombe
OP-ED

The term “free speech” is often thrown around in environments such as our campus, but it sometimes feels like many people don’t know what it really entails. To me, freedom of speech is the fundamental principle that every individual naturally possesses the right to express their ideas, opinions, and beliefs without fear of censorship or repercussions. “Speech” is a broad term itself, referring to literal speech, posting online, peaceful protest, wearing or displaying symbols, and other forms of everyday expression. In our new digital millennium, an age marked by rapid globalization and technological advancement, the protection of free speech has become increasingly paramount.

One particular free speech arena that has received a lot of attention is the humble college campus. Especially in the United States, there have been numerous post secondary institutions embroiled in controversy over their on-campus speech policies. Elite US universities are often the worst offenders; the American-based Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression’s free speech rankings show that Ivy League schools in particular score average at best, with Harvard and the University of Pennsylvania coming in dead last among all surveyed schools. Many US schools score very poorly on attributes including political diversity, comfort expressing ideas, and tolerance for speakers.

Some of these same problems can be found on select Canadian university campuses, but in my time at the University of Toronto, I’ve actually been pleasantly surprised by the environment of free speech here. Part of it certainly stems from the enormous student population and the obvious diversity that comes with that, but free speech is also embodied as a core institutional value. I’ve seen all manner of events, student organizations, and speakers on campus, and the benefits of this speech-permissive environment are immeasurable. Diversity of thought and belief as well as frequent and rigorous debate on everything from the mundane to the extremely controversial is quite literally what drives academia and our world forward. To restrict an atmosphere of permissive speech is to directly halt human progress; something which I am glad UofT doesn’t seem to actively partake in.

One of the key moments I remember admiring the atmosphere of free speech on campus is when I read President Meric Gertler’s statement on the renewed conflict in the Middle East following the October 7th attacks. As someone who read statements from multiple universities on the conflict, I have to say that UofT’s is by far the best. The statement begins by acknowledging the gravity of the situation and the grief involved, but then moves to an instructive tone for what the campus community should look to do going forward. In paragraph seven, the statement says, “Our university must demonstrate to the world how civil, informed debate about difficult issues can be conducted. This means that uncomfortable, even upsetting positions will be expressed by members of our community. It is our collective duty to ensure that such perspectives, so long as they are lawful, continue to be heard, and that those who disagree can safely engage in respectful debate.” This is exactly what I want to be hearing from my university during times of strained free speech rights: not just an acknowledgement, but explicit protection of the rights of individuals to espouse even the most unpopular and upsetting positions, as long as they are not actively inciting violence or engaging in discrimination. The statement is absolutely correct in positing that respectful debate is the best way forward, and I for one am thrilled to see UofT furthering free speech rights.

To that end, and also in response to the Israel/Gaza conflict, UofT has appointed Randy Boyagoda as provostial advisor on civil discourse for an 18 month term in an effort to further bolster the free speech climate on campus. Boyagoda has previously served as president of PEN Canada, the Canadian chapter of an international non-profit which defends freedom of expression as part of its mission. On the subject of free expression and civil discourse, Boyagoda has said, “what’s important with civil discourse is to create the conditions, inside and outside the classroom, especially at a place as inherently and variously diverse as our university, for discussions that acknowledge difference while working towards shared understandings.” In essence, I believe his point of view can be summarized thusly: in times of intense ideological disagreement, the solution is more speech, not less. Where many universities may have taken the opportunity to install further administrative bureaucracy with the

goal of limiting certain kinds of speech and “protecting students,” UofT decided to do the exact opposite and appoint an individual tasked with finding the best way to encourage civil and informed debate on campus. Boyagoda’s term just began on January 1st, and I think there’s a lot of opportunity here for him and his soon-to-be-formed working group to make progress on campus, even if it’s only on the margins.

Despite having (what is in my mind) a solid foundation in place, and bolstering said foundation through actions such as Boyagoda’s appointment, there have been some recent (and notable) free speech missteps at UofT. On January 22nd, Omar Patel, an Imam with UofT’s Muslim Chaplaincy at the Scarborough campus since 2016, was told he was being removed from his role. Per reporting from The Varsity and CBC, the removal came as a response to an alleged anti-Israel post on his Instagram. Said post compared Israel’s actions against Gaza to those Nazi Germany took during World War II, thus labelling Israel’s actions as genocide by association. Many view comparisons of Israel to Nazi Germany as themselves anti-semitic, hence why action was taken against Patel after Hillel Ontario, an organization that supports Jewish students on campus, submitted evidence of the post to UofT. While ensuring the safety of Jewish students on campus is paramount, I believe more should have been done to transparently investigate the matter; Patel claims that his employer, the Muslim Chaplaincy, was not involved in the process at all. While most of us can probably agree that the alleged contents of the post are rather unbecoming of a religious leader on campus, it still stands that personal posts on social media, even those many deem controversial, should not be the sole grounds for a firing. Per the Varsity, because of this action, Muslim students at UTSC now feel less supported, a rather obviously poor outcome.

Perhaps the biggest recent free speech misstep at UofT has come from the student side. At their November Annual General Meeting, the University of Toronto Mississauga Student’s Union (UTMSU) officially adopted a “pro-Palestine stance” that extends to all services and clubs funded by the union. The UTMSU has even explicitly stated that while they can’t force clubs to take certain positions, they can withhold funding and recognition should clubs not comply. These are exactly the kinds of repercussions for speech that cannot exist in a true environment of free expression. This motion is nothing short of a disaster for freedom of speech at UTM, and constitutes a blatant abuse of power by the UTMSU. All clubs recognized by the UTMSU are now dealing with forced association and compelled speech, things that are expressly forbidden under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and even the UTMSU’s own mission statement, which asserts that individuals have rights regardless of political opinion. This is to say nothing of how Jewish students at UTM must feel, with Hillel UofT calling the motion “unacceptable and dangerous”.

As members of a public institution, it is vital that we recognize and accept our role in promoting and maintaining a campus environment conducive to free speech. We therefore must learn to abstract our own opinions from our ideas on how speech should be governed, and foster an environment where even our ideological opposites can easily speak their minds. For example, I personally believe that communism is a regressive and deeply destructive ideology that has done irreparable damage to the world. But, when I came across students advocating for communism during the University of Toronto Students Union clubs fair in September, I engaged in a short conversation, shared my own point of view, and then told them how despite my difference in ideology, I wholeheartedly supported their right to be sharing their ideas on campus. Nobody alive is qualified to decide whether certain speech is inherently right or wrong. Therefore, we must have a free and open marketplace of ideas to even begin to triangulate around something that a plurality of us can agree on. I am proud to be a part of a UofT community that I believe does this quite effectively, but I also remain leery of potential future erosion of this strong culture of free expression. I encourage us all to actively participate in important discourse here at UofT, while also remaining vigilant for any threats to our inalienable rights.

THE OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN THIS ARTICLE ARE THOSE OF THE AUTHOR, AND DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THOSE OF THE HERALD OR INNIS COLLEGE.

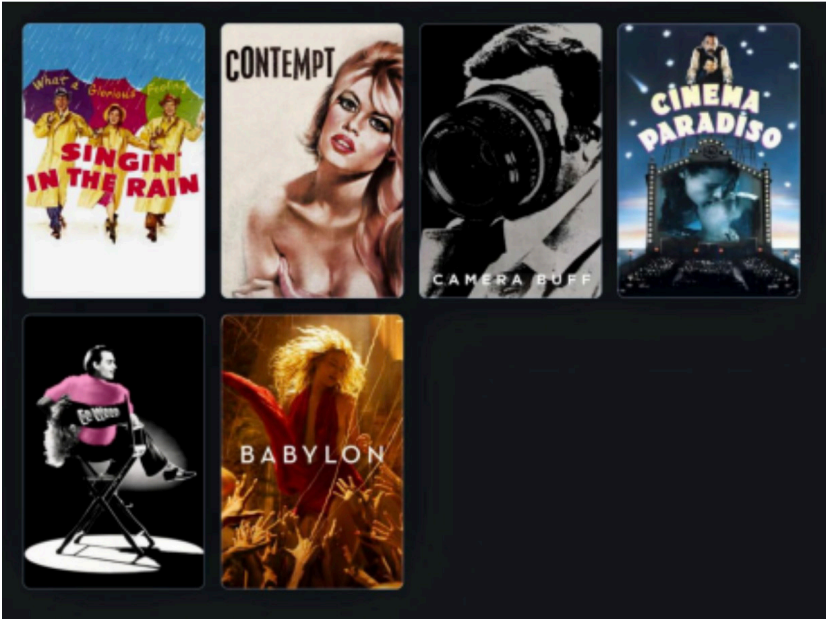


A Diverse Movie Marathon

Selection: Global Cinematic Journey

Atinc Goc

ARTS & CULTURE



Lights, camera, action! Welcome to a cinematic journey unlike any other. This movie marathon selection spans decades and continents, offering a diverse array of films that celebrate the art of filmmaking itself. From the glitz of Hollywood’s golden age to intimate dramas from Europe, each movie brings a unique perspective, enriching the viewing experience with its cultural and temporal diversity. I promise these movies will enhance your love for cinema.

Singing in the Rain, Stanley Donen and Gene Kelly (1952)
Kicking off our marathon is the timeless classic *Singing in the Rain*, directed by Stanley Donen and Gene Kelly. Set against the backdrop of Hollywood’s transition from silent films to “talkies,” this musical extravaganza is a delightful homage to the golden age of cinema. Through its addictive songs, dazzling dance numbers, and great screenplay, the film captures the joy and excitement of filmmaking while also showing the challenges faced by actors and directors during a period of industry upheaval. From Gene Kelly’s legendary dance sequences to the unforgettable title song performed in a rainstorm, *Singing in the Rain* continues to captivate audiences with its infectious charm and energy.

Contempt/Le Mepris, Jean-Luc Godard (1963)
Legendary European filmmaker Jean-Luc Godard is next with *Contempt*, a provocative exploration of love, art, and the complexities of filmmaking. Starring Brigitte Bardot and Michel Piccoli, the film delves into the complicated relationship between a screenwriter and his wife against the backdrop of a troubled film production. The film also showcases the contrasting perspectives on cinema between an American film producer and a European writer. Martin Scorsese argues that *Contempt* is “one of the greatest films ever made about the actual process of filmmaking” by adding that it is also a “brilliant, romantic and genuinely tragic” movie. Through its fragmented narrative and introspective style, *Contempt* challenges conventional storytelling techniques and invites viewers to question the nature of cinematic representation. With its striking visuals, and philosophical undertones, the film offers a compelling glimpse into the inner workings of the creative process and the tensions that arise between artistic vision and commercial demands.

Camera Buff/Amator, Krzysztof Kieślowski (1979)
Moving into more introspective territory, *Camera Buff*, directed by Krzysztof Kieślowski, offers a poignant exploration of the relationship between cinema and reality. The film follows the journey of Filip, a factory worker turned amateur filmmaker, whose newfound passion for capturing life on camera leads to both creative fulfillment and personal turmoil. He decides to buy a camera to record his newborn baby. However, as Filip’s obsession with filmmaking grows, he grapples with ethical dilemmas and confronts the power of the medium to shape perceptions and manipulate truth. *Camera Buff* serves as a cinema’s transformative power and the ethical responsibilities associated with its practice.

Cinema Paradiso, Giuseppe Tornatore (1988)
No movie marathon about cinema would be complete without Giuseppe Tornatore’s *Cinema Paradiso*, a heartfelt praise to the magic of movie theaters and the memories they hold. This is a story shaped around a village’s small movie theatre. Set in a small Sicilian village, the film follows the lifelong relationship between a young boy named Salvatore and the local projectionist, Alfredo. As Salvatore grows up, he learns about love, loss, and the power of storytelling. *Cinema Paradiso* beautifully captures the nostalgia and enchantment associated with the cinematic experience, reminding us of the profound impact that movies can have on our lives.

Ed Wood, Tim Burton (1994):
Tim Burton’s *Ed Wood* pays homage to one of the most eccentric figures in the history of filmmaking, Edward D. Wood Jr. Known for his unconventional approach to filmmaking and a penchant for B-movies, Ed Wood embodies the spirit of a true maverick artist. Johnny Depp delivers a memorable performance as the aspiring director whose relentless passion and unbridled creativity defy all odds. Ed Wood was considered one of the worst filmmakers of all time, but the director Tim Burton did not agree. In the book *Burton on Burton*, he says he felt something special about Wood, and he responded to it: “Being passionate and optimistic is great to a certain point, and then you are just in complete denial, it becomes delusional. That’s why I liked the Ed Wood character.” Through its quirky characters and offbeat humor, the film celebrates the resilience of artists who dare to dream big, even in the face of constant rejection and ridicule. Ed Wood may look like a story of a obsessive and delusional director who wants to be the next Orson Wells, but in reality it is a story of every filmmaker. At least, Tim Burton believes so. “The line between success and failure is a thin one” he says, and adds “I believe that, and who knows? Maybe I could become Ed Wood tomorrow”

Babylon, Damien Chazelle (2022)
Box office flop for some, director’s masterpiece for others. The best comment I remember about this movie was “a future cult classic”. After his success with *Whiplash* and *La La Land*, Damien Chazelle directed this big budget production. It is clear that he was highly influenced by *Singing in the Rain*. There are many references to it in the script, and also with visuals, shoots and costumes. Even the characters remind me of the 1952 classic. The opening of *Babylon* takes viewers back to the vibrant atmosphere of 1920s Hollywood, where Manny Torres, a Mexican American, navigates the hectic landscape of the silent film era. As he tries to find himself a place in the system, we encounter a diverse ensemble of characters, including the ambitious actress Nellie LaRoy and the charismatic silent film star Jack Conrad. Damien Chazelle’s script is unpredictable, which keeps you engaged in the story. The cast, led by standout performances from Margot Robbie, Diego Calva, and Brad Pitt, captures the essence of Hollywood’s golden age, while Pitt’s portrayal of Jack Conrad adds layers of complexity to the storyline. Unlike *Singing in the Rain*, *Babylon* focuses on Hollywood’s darker side and shows the struggle. The film explores industry changes affecting actors, producers, and musicians, often leading to abrupt career shifts. Chazelle’s ambitious storytelling approach centers on the experiences of outsiders like Manny, Sidney, and Nellie, who grapple with their identities in an industry that often treats them as expendable commodities. *Babylon* ultimately celebrates the enduring passion for cinema and the profound impact it has on both its creators and its audience.

As the curtains close on our cinematic journey, we’re reminded of the magical power of storytelling that cinema weaves. From the joyous melodies of *Singing in the Rain* to the introspective depths of *Camera Buff*, and the nostalgic embrace of *Cinema Paradiso*, each film has left an enduring mark on our hearts and minds. *Ed Wood* and *Babylon* offer contrasting yet equally compelling glimpses into the trials and triumphs of filmmaking, showcasing the resilience and passion of those who dare to dream amidst adversity. Through laughter, tears, and moments of profound reflection, these films have illuminated the transformative power of cinema and its ability to shape our perceptions of the world. As we say goodbye to this cinematic adventure, let’s carry forward our passion for storytelling, fueled by the enchantment and wisdom of the silver screen.



SAM'S SHOWTIME SCHEDULE

Sam Guevara FILM COLUMN

As the heat heightens and a brightness beams, days become longer and experiences turn memorable. As we enter the summer season, let us enter with a showtime special, this time in tribute to the season. Without further ado, a movie critic (*avid Letterboxd user*) and film scholar (*cinema minor undergraduate*) presents: **Set in Summer.**

1. **AFTERSUN** (2022) Dir. Charlotte Wells ***“Be whoever you want to be. You have time.”***

An acclaimed feature directorial debut, *Aftersun* follows the memories of an 11-year old girl who spends a final vacation with her father, both the melancholic memories and the miniDV memories. Tackling adolescence and parenthood as well as acceptance and grief, the film is full of both warmth and wonder. Join Sophie as she recollects her past, specifically the relationship between her and Calum, her father who she remembers, yet a man she never knew.



2. **牯嶺街少年殺人事件/A BRIGHTER SUMMER DAY** (1991) Dir. Edward Yang

“Things can’t go on as they are now. Someone has to take charge.”

Based on a real incident and praised in discourse around contemporary cinema, *A Brighter Summer Day* captures the conflicts of life for a young boy from Taiwan throughout the 1960s. Dealing with first romance, friendship, fights, and family drama, the film is an extraordinary epic. Join Xiao as he undergoes injustices as the middle child of a mainland Chinese refugee family and as an embodiment of the social, cultural, and political scenario of Taiwan at that period.

3. **DO THE RIGHT THING** (1989) Dir. Spike Lee ***“Are we gonna live together, together are we gonna live?”***

Nominated for two Oscars and labelled as an auteur masterpiece, *Do the Right Thing* finds itself in a Brooklyn neighbourhood and focuses on its racial tensions. Occuring on the hottest day of the year, confrontations and tensions turn into violence. Its themes are still relevant today, from gentrification to police brutality. Join Mookie as he examines social issues through the film’s signature look of dutch-angle shots and vibrantly-bright colours.



4. **ESTIU 1993/SUMMER 1993** (2017) Dir. Carla Simón ***“That girl has no morals. You weren’t there, you don’t know.”***

Inspired as an autobiographical tale, *Summer 1993* shares an intense take on innocence and confronts loss in childhood. Mixing bedtime or bathtime scenes with shots of kids playing together along with sequences of arguments with parents, the film portrays both the complex and the simple. Join Frida on her kid perspective and in her child universe as she loses her parents and moves in with new caretakers.

5. **BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN** (2005) Dir. Ang Lee ***“You know it could be like this. Just like this, always.”***

Hailed in queer cinema and admired as a neo-Western, *Brokeback Mountain* depicts two young men who meet when they find work as a sheep herder and camp tender, then go on to develop a relationship. Creating a melodramatic love story, the film delves deep into desire, intolerance, masculinity, sexuality, and a sense of home. Join Ennis Del Mar and Jack Twist as they engage in an affair one night and deal with it for the next of twenty years.





..... ★★☆☆☆
FILM REVIEWS FROM YOU
IN COLLABORATION WITH CINSSU
.....

Singing and Slashing: Bollywood’s *A Nightmare On Elm Street*—*Mahakaal*
BURAK BATU TUNÇEL

Forever engraved in the mind of a generation, a certain film became the reason thousands of people have been afraid to go to sleep. Razors as fingers, mauled skin as a face, an unforgettable villain who has been the face of horror for decades... A group of teenagers are being stalked in their dreams by this mythical man, and they wake up to find scars on their bodies. Can it be just a dream? Eventually, they have to find a solution to their problem. The only thing standing in their way is their love of dancing and singing!

A Nightmare on Elm Street (1984)? Oh no, I was talking about *Mahakaal* (1994), the Bollywood remake of the beloved classic with a cultural twist which is absolutely crazy and unique.

I was lucky enough to attend Revue Cinema’s 30th Anniversary screening for the film after wanting to see it ever since I read Pete Tombs’ terrific book about global genre and exploitation cinema, *Mondo Macabro: Weird & Wonderful Cinema Around the World*. The India section mostly covers the works of the Ramsay family, who are the main producers of horror cinema in the country. Specifically Tulsi and Shyam, known as the Ramsay Brothers, became synonymous with the genre after directing over 30 of these films.

Back to the movie. Well, *Mahakaal* has it all: horror, comedy, action, romance, drama, music... You name it, brother! My philosophy in life is to look at things like a soup: if the ingredients in your soup are good, the soup itself also is good. It is debatable if the ingredients in *Mahakaal* are harmonious but it definitely has a one-of-a-kind flavor. It’s an experience—a really curious and goofy one.

Firstly, let’s take a look at how much of the original *Nightmare* is retained and how much gets changed in translation. The basic storyline is pretty much identical with the crucial plot points being repeated in shot-by-shot remade sequences. However, there are elements and scenes borrowed from the sequels, too. The waterbed kill is from *The Dream Master* and the possession subplot seems to be derived from *Freddy’s Revenge*, where the titular killer possesses a teenage boy. Also, the theme music of the original franchise is used within the film, probably without copyright. The inspirations go beyond the series with some scenes being borrowed by *The Church*, *Evil Dead 2*, and *Day of the Dead*.

Freddy Krueger is rebooted as Shakaal. There is a spiritual explanation for the villain, as he is the embodiment of all evil. Shakaal sacrifices children to an evil entity and one of his victims happens to be the sister of the protagonist, which is the traumatic backbone of the story. However, he is not burned alive like Krueger. He was always disfigured from the start. Instead, the father character semi-buries him alive, and I say that because the coffin obviously does not fall into the hole! Also, it is a shame we don’t see him dance and sing... a missed opportunity for sure.

However, what interests me the most is how such a story translates to a whole different audience and market. Pop Indian Cinema, or Bollywood, seems to be concerned with the spectacle more than anything. The main spectacle that comes to mind is the singing, which there is plenty of here. In popular Bollywood films, the songs often move the story forward while in *Mahakaal*, they slow down the narrative. It’s not everyday you see a bunch of teenagers going to a picnic and singing about love after they were scarred by a maniac in their dreams. How I see it is that the music is used as relief from the horror storyline. Maybe the target audience at that time needed it, due to low exposure to horror.

Stylistically, there are some interesting choices. The lighting for the film with the blues and reds feels like a throwback to early gothic horror. Meanwhile, like Indian melodramas, the camerawork features many crash zooms, put together through discontinuity editing where actions sometimes repeat 2-3 times. The production value is not great. The chains in the dream sequences seem to have a perfectly calculated 1 meter between each other and the light source is directly visible in one scene. I love the part when they go to the cemetery during the daytime but they have flashlights in their hands! I feel like the errors do not make the film worse, I think they make it better because they are funny and *Mahakaal* definitely does not take itself so seriously with the frequent comedic relief and random fist fight scenes.

In an era where we are getting corporate remakes and reboots with massive budgets, *Mahakaal* feels like a breath of fresh air. It is interesting to see how the story translates to a very specific audience. It is also definitely a unique kind of entertainment in which you get a whole lot of basically everything. If you love awkward and bizarre global remakes, *Mahakaal* is something you should dance and spin kick into.

Consuming the body with David Cronenberg and J.G Ballard
MALAIKA MITRA

In the future, I dream of poured concrete over industrial wastelands, edging the shoreline into orgasmic destruction with condo development. I dream of e-waste barrows, waiting to be excavated by digital archaeologists in thousands of years. I dream of a simulated omniverse, in which the burn of nostalgia is as real as the ease of forgetting. In the future, I dream of now.

Surgery is sex, and sex is public performance. This is the main conceit of *Crimes of the Future* (2022, dir. David Cronenberg), where we follow the performance artists Saul Tenser (Viggo Mortensen) and Caprice (Léa Seydoux). The former is an artist with “accelerated evolution syndrome” needing constant surgeries to excise organs rapidly developing in his body, and the latter is a retired trauma surgeon willing (even desiring) to perform the surgeries for an audience. In this world, humans have evolved to be without pain, except for a select few who exclusively feel it in their sleep; Saul Tenser is one of them. He must make use of a number of “LifeFormWare” technologies, machines that look like organisms, in order to eat and sleep. Caprice makes use of one such machine to perform surgeries on Saul, sensually touching a giant beetle strapped to her chest to control its slicing and sucking maneuvers.

While watching this movie, I was jolted back into the world of the postmodern authors I had come to love. The *Atrocity Exhibition* by J.G. Ballard follows a man with an ever-changing name—always starting with T, such as Travis, Talbot, Travers, Tallis—as he interacts with the things that dominate his cultural landscape: Marilyn Monroe, the Vietnam War, and the assassination of John F. Kennedy.

“Love & Napalm: Export USA,” the 11th chapter of *The Atrocity Exhibition*, reads like a bizarre report of several psychological experiments performed on the American public. Ballard describes a perverse society, where psychosexual arousal is stimulated by watching “newsreel atrocity films” that depict racist and misogynistic torture. Atrocity films are used in conjunction with “combat films,” the former used to stimulate the mind and the latter used to sedate it.

His criticism here is most immediately of America’s involvement in the Vietnam war and the American public’s complicity, but this also plays into his broader commentary about the flattening of sex, violence, and consumerism into one. In his notes on the chapter, he says that although the chapter is taken to be specifically anti-American, “the hidden logic at work within the mass media—above all, the inadvertent packaging of violence and cruelty like attractive commercial products—had already spread throughout the world.”

In *The Atrocity Exhibition*, bodies are on display, this time instrumentalized—packaged—to manipulate the emotions of their consumers. This happens all at once through a barrage of billboards and mass media. The women start to look like Marilyn Monroe, and Marilyn Monroe’s body seems as abstract and expansive as dunes in the desert. Karen Novotny, Tallis’ lover, stands in the corner of a room. The white walls of the room are sand dunes, and so when she interrupts the corner with her body, Tallis must kill her. In *Crimes of the Future*, the “inner beauty” of bodies (i.e. organs) is made both public and sensual. Caprice is notably a former trauma surgeon, and so the sexual pleasure that she gains from performing surgery on Saul and herself has inescapably violent undertones. Abstractions upon abstractions are what make the body open to the erotic and violent for Tallis, whereas for Caprice and Saul it is desire that drives them.

The metaphorical implications of Cronenberg’s surgical body horror does not stop sex. At the beginning, we see a boy eating a plastic trash can, and as a result, his mother suffocates him thinking that he is a monster. We learn over the course of the movie that the boy’s father had surgically altered himself so that his digestive system could process plastic, and only plastic. He then passed this trait on to his son; the bizarreness of a surgical change corresponding to a genetic change is not overlooked.

This, paired with the fact that humans in this world cannot feel pain, provokes a question: why would humans evolve to have traits that could kill them? By the end of the movie, I realized that the evolution that *Crimes of the Future* refers to isn’t toward development, but destruction. If the environment humans destroyed couldn’t kill them, then the body would do it itself. Organic beings and industrial waste merge, creating an impossible future—or, a prescient diagnosis of our present trajectory.



Go to the movie theaters, especially the independent ones.

Mark N Metri

ARTS & CULTURE

There are seemingly countless benefits to watching movies at home. The advent of streaming and the accessibility of pirated films makes it a no-brainer to many. The home viewer can control the volume and the environment, take bathroom breaks, talk, or stay silent. These benefits seemed to be killing the movie theater industry over the last decade, yet attendance has seen a post-pandemic rebound. I would argue that there are two main reasons people bypass the convenience of a movie night for a movie trip: to experience cinema in a larger, higher-quality format and for the communal experience.

The recent success of films like Christopher Nolan's *Oppenheimer* and Denis Villeneuve's *Dune: Part Two* reflects audiences' willingness to flood theaters to see a film in a massive format like IMAX. This summer also saw people flock to see Greta Gerwig's *Barbie*—not for its cinematic nature, but rather, for the cultural moment surrounding it. This success is great for theaters and cinema in general.

Still, we should expect more from ourselves as audiences if we want to foster a culture that supports its artists. I urge you to go to the movies for a third reason: to genuinely enrich your understanding of the medium and the world. To me, this means being open to growth and challenging your biases. This is where independent cinemas come in.

A large chunk of today's audiences might reject independent theaters because of their (general) lack of recliners and IMAX screens. It is true that independent cinemas at least partly fail to live up to people's desires for massive cinematic experiences; these attitudes have led to the domination of multiplexes like Cineplex and to independent theaters' struggle for survival.

However, independent movie theaters are operated and attended by people who love cinema. This goes a long way in forming the communal experience of the movie theater. In my experience, the audiences in these theaters laugh more, clap louder, and talk less than those at multiplexes.

Because of their love for cinema, programming at independent theaters tends to be very inspiring, allowing younger generations to see older classics while also allowing older generations to reconnect with their past. Coolidge Corner Theatre and the Somerville Theatre in the Boston area, The Fox and Paradise Theatre, as well as Innis' very own Free Film Friday in Toronto have all been essential in opening me up to films I would not have been able to see at a multiplex.

Reviews

In fact, just last week at Paradise Theatres, I was able to watch a double-feature of Orson Welles' *Chimes at Midnight* (1965) and Kurosawa's *Throne of Blood* (1957). In the last month, I actually bought tickets to three separate screenings of Akira Kurosawa films at Paradise theaters, the first two of which I missed. Fortunately, I was able to make it to the double-feature last week. Each film was my first experience with their respective director—and I had not heard of either title. Both were great, and you should definitely go see them.

Chimes and *Throne of Blood* are both Shakespeare adaptations. One of my favorite things about these is the range of experiences an audience can have based on whether or not they have read the play or have seen it adapted in some capacity.



Chimes is an Orson Welles' adaptation of Shakespeare's *Henry IV* (Parts I and II). Having not read the play, my background of the story was non-existent. Whatever the tone of the actual play may be, this film was hilarious. Welles' physicality in the role of Falstaff was unlike anything I had seen before. Falstaff is good friends with King Henry IV's son, Prince Hal. Spending most of his time with Falstaff, Hal needs to prove to his father that he can turn his back on his old life and, consequently, his good friend Falstaff. Despite the comedy, this film definitely gets emotional at some points. Henry IV's soliloquy was incredibly haunting towards the end. Go see this one.



Throne of Blood is Akira Kurosawa's adaptation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. I have read the play multiple times and have seen Joel Coen's adaptation, *The Tragedy of Macbeth*, twice (I loved it). Coen's adaptation was visually haunting and essentially followed the source material word-for-word. Kurosawa takes the interpretation in a different direction, shuttling *Throne of Blood* to feudal Japan. This is easily the best Shakespeare adaptation and one of the best movies I have ever seen. Despite being made in the 1950s, the film looks fantastic, and the visual storytelling is incredibly haunting and scary. I knew *Macbeth* dealt a bit with the supernatural, but Kurosawa's interpretation of a stripped-back script and intense supernatural, if not schizophrenic, visuals was a revelation. The best performance here is by Isuzu Yamada as Lady Asaji, Kurosawa's Lady Macbeth. She is silent and potent with her body language and movement. I could talk about this one forever, but I would really encourage you to see for yourselves.



The Acacia Cafe blooms at new Wycliffe location

Jesse McDougall CAMPUS NEWS



On a Monday morning inside an elegant corner office, Damon Shahidi spoke with Wycliffe College Principal Stephen Andrews. With a wide smile, Damon heartily thanked the seminary principal for his support of Wycliffe College's new Acacia Cafe, which was once known as the nearby Innis Cafe.

"We are blessed to be part of this community," Damon says.

In mid-2023, U of T Food Services terminated the Shahidis' Innis lease due to building renovations which left the over 20-year tenants to find an alternative kitchen space on their own. Options were dwindling.

One afternoon, Principal Andrews learned that the cafe was urgently seeking a new home from an online petition created by PhD graduate Sanchia deSouza. Her petition reached over 4,400 signatures from cafe supporters who left comments about the memories and friendships the cafe gave them.

The Innis Cafe is now called the Acacia Cafe at Wycliffe College, and the family business is back on track with the same dedicated employees and the tasty offerings that so many of us came to love.

"I know there are a lot of folks who went regularly to the [Innis] cafe...and we're just so grateful for...all that the family has contributed to our welfare here," said Andrews. For the first time since Wycliffe's classrooms and residence emptied during the pandemic, this historic building feels alive again.

The Shahidis' Journey

The beloved cafe was first opened by the Shahidi family in 2000. Parents Gunash and Ali Shahidi moved to Canada from Tehran in 1991 with their son, Damon, and Ali soon purchased a Panzerotto Pizza location where 11-year-old Damon spent countless hours after school. "It was like I was literally working there, and I learned a lot," recalled Damon.

In 1995, Ali left the pizza business to open a juice bar called Carrot Heads, serving burritos and quesadillas alongside freshly prepared fruit drinks. The health-conscious menu built the foundation for what was to become the Innis Cafe, and in 2000, the Shahidis sold their idea to U of T Food Services.

That was the year when Ali and Gunash met Frank Cunningham, Innis College's sixth principal and a strong proponent of the Innis Cafe before his passing in 2022. Cunningham saw the family's special approach to food, which, unlike U of T's Starbucks and Second Cup, meant the Shahidis prepared all of their food on site from scratch. It is no easy feat.

"We used to order [ingredients], but now the prices are so high that my dad handpicks everything from the grocery store," said Damon. The fresh produce is then prepped and cooked by longtime-staffers Josie and Felicia, and lastly meals are carried up a narrow staircase

to the Acacia Cafe's gleaming glass display case. It's a delicate ballet perfected over the past 23 years.

When selecting ingredients, Ali's knowledge extends far into the past. For over a decade, he worked for an Iranian bread and cereal company, and Gunash Shahidi worked for Iran's Standards Company testing all kinds of Iranian products. Both of Damon's parents hold PhDs in food science.

So, at a time when U of T Food Services was bringing an increasing number of corporate food chains onto campus which relied on pre-made ingredients, Frank Cunningham worked diligently (even into his retirement) supporting and protecting the Innis Cafe.

"[Frank] moved to Victoria, BC, but every time he came back to Toronto, he would check in on us," said Damon.

Frank's work, along with the support of thousands of community members, has enabled the Shahidis to craft a niche following of loyal students and happy clients who return time and again. In fact, Damon says he's seen several student customers reappear as professors and U of T staff, sometimes with their little kids in tow.

"We come in here day in and day out really [putting] our heart and soul into this place," said Damon Shahidi in his kitchen-side office. "It [feels] really good to know that people support us and to know that we've built a big community [here]."

Welcome to Wycliffe

Damon says he and his parents are overjoyed with their new kitchen and equipment at Wycliffe. The biggest change is the cafe's dining area, the Refectory, which flaunts gleaming chandeliers, spacious wooden tables, and intricate stained glass pieces that cast a colorful light into the room.

Hannah Monger, a fourth-year English major, thinks the Acacia Cafe is one of the best places to get food on campus. "The people are so lovely and warm, [and] they know everyone's name who comes here," she said while enjoying a Balkan spanakopita and a fresh smoothie.

The Refectory walls contain echoes from generations of students who studied, lived and ate communal dinners at Wycliffe College. Principal Andrews said, "In my day we had to wear ties for the meals, and even before that people had to wear academic gowns!" Some of the religious traditions remain, and on Tuesdays evenings the Acacia Cafe caters "Family Dinners" for Wycliffe residents, the faculty, and their families.

Student Miranda Peters is a regular at Tuesday dinners, and in the hallway beside the Principal's office she thanked Damon for his family's dedication. "When we come together it's all ages—kids, families and professors—in a really [welcoming] space," she said. Each week attendees sing grace and read through weekly announcements before their meal. "If we find out that someone has a birthday, then we'll sing to them and

bang the tables," laughed President Andrews.

The Acacia Team

In his office below the cafe, Damon Shahidi runs the operation, ordering ingredients and scheduling two new employees. One of them is Melik Bayat, a young man from Istanbul, Turkey, who accepted his first job from the Shahidis after arriving in Canada. The Acacia staff also includes two Chilean women who joined the team in 2022.

Antonia Orellana runs the cash register, taking orders and making friends. She's now a confident team-player, but her entry onto the team was rather last minute. "I came to Canada [to learn] English and study customer service for my work permit, and at the end of the program I needed to take a co-op internship," she said. With only a few days left until the deadline, Antonia had barely begun the search, so when Ali and Gunash offered her a chance to stay on, she graciously accepted. Today, cafe-goers can expect both Spanish and Turkish to be spoken around the Refectory.

Prices, from Market to Menu

Post-pandemic inflation significantly raised prices for food providers across the board. "Tomatoes have gone up from 89 cents per pound to \$1.99, broccoli jumped from a dollar to \$2.5 per pound, and bacon went from \$3.5/500g to \$8," said Damon.

Acacia customers haven't seen prices rise accordingly, but Damon says the increase is nearing. As things stand, Damon's menu offers a \$7.10 burger and a burrito for \$7.20 compared to the \$9 base hamburger and \$12 burrito students can buy at U of T Food Service locations. An independently-owned cafe in Hart House, the Arbor Room, serves burgers for \$8.25, and while they match the Acacia Cafe's breakfast options, the Shahidi's juices and smoothies are unique to Wycliffe College.

Overall, Damon's philosophy is that by preparing each dish in house, the Cafe will pass on the savings to students who can enjoy healthy and inexpensive food while pursuing their studies. What's his favorite menu item? "I like our grilled paninis with melted cheese and chicken," confirmed Damon. "That's something I've eaten [since] childhood."

Transplanting a Tree

During their move, co-owner Gunash Shahidi sat down to think about a new cafe name. Two decades of memories were attached to their old name and location, but "Acacia," the name of a resilient tree found throughout the Middle-East, felt promising.

She learned that acacia wood was used in the Bible to build places of worship, and across Iran the tree is known for its deep roots which support ecosystems of plants and animals. Acacia, she decided, was the right name.

Zachary Zanatta

PLAYLIST

All across the city, there are parties, dozens of them. You jump from party to party, stepping from the intoxicating haze of the nightclub to the claustrophobic heat of the bar to the turbulent crowds of a concert. The night whips you back and forth,

Have a great summer!

Inside Out - Spoon





I Wasn't "A Numb Little Bug" At the Em Beihold Concert

Rebecca Sacco
REVIEW

The feeling I get at concerts is like no other. I love the anticipation that builds up in me while walking towards the usher to scan my ticket as I enter the venue, especially if it's a place that I am walking into for the very first time. It's all an experience.

The first time I ever heard Em Beihold was her hit song "Numb Little Bug" and I instantly connected with it. I knew I had to watch her live.

The concert was held at The Axis Club on College Street. I had never been to the venue but I liked it. This felt like the shortest concert I have been to. The doors opened at 7:00 and the opener, Madelline, came onstage at 8:00 with Em following her at around 9:00.

Madelline (yes with two L's) captivated the audience with her performance. She even surprised the audience and started playing the flute during her song "Happy as Hell." It has yet to be released, but by the crowd's reaction will definitely be a favourite. It was very cool and unexpected. At one point during her set, someone in the crowd shouted for Madelline to marry them, and Madelline's response was yes as she put on the ring that was thrown on stage. Overall a very enjoyable performance.

Em Beihold brings energy to the stage. She had on the cutest purple outfit and sang her heart out. Em surprised the crowd with some new songs including "Shiny New Things." I definitely need her to release it ASAP. Em spoke about her dream of wanting to be part of the music industry and how she thought the closest moment to that was when she was a worker on The Voice. She explained how she auditioned for The Voice and American Idol but was rejected many times. Now, she is on the "Maybe Life is Good Tour" and it appears to be going well. I loved the energy of the crowd as they sang along. The people at a concert definitely make or break my experiences at the event and this was such an amazing crowd. Em has such a fun presence on stage making sure she had variety at her concert. She had acoustic sets, slower songs, faster songs and her stage presence as she moved across the stage matched the energy of the crowd. She had just enough of everything to keep things interesting.

Some songs you should check out by Em Beihold: "Egg in the Backseat," "Porcelain," "Calculated," and "Spiderman."

It is an incredible experience when you can attend a concert at smaller venues. The vibes are so much stronger when you are closer to the artist. This was truly a very fun concert. It had a lot of variety that made it even more enjoyable and I cannot wait to see what Em Beihold does next.



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Fallacies

Rick Lu

CROSSWORD

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- DOWN
- 1. Spy org.
 - 2. One in France
 - 3. Fallacious scarecrow
 - 4. Any day now
 - 5. Subj. for some immigrants
 - 6. Besieged
 - 7. Greek King, namesake of a famous bull
 - 8. Shaquille of basketball
 - 9. Fallacious slide
 - 10. “___ a ___”, little by little in music
 - 11. Port city in Ukraine
 - 12. “It’s all clear now”
 - 13. To a smaller degree
 - 18. Commit a water-based fallacious crime
 - 22. Partner of Stitch
 - 23. Groundhog name
 - 24. All in Rome
 - 26. Have
 - 31. Toronto, Durham, Halton, Peel, and York for short
 - 34. Phon___ or morph___, linguistic unit
 - 35. French red wine
 - 37. Our timezone in winter
 - 40. Possible argument shape
 - 41. Red and white bank
 - 42. Tic ___, small mints
 - 44. Uni. campus near Hollywood
 - 45. Shooting in France
 - 47. Man and machine
 - 48. A BMW, slangily
 - 49. From the start in Rome
 - 54. Lobbed zygotes at
 - 55. Una ___, using the soft pedal to a pianist and “one string” to an Italian
 - 58. Depicted in art form
 - 60. Messy one
 - 63. Online asset for DnD
 - 64. Geologic timescale between an eon and a period
 - 65. When clocks jump ahead (abbr.)

ACROSS

- 1. Swear
- 5. Red puppet
- 9. Ruin, as a movie
- 14. Word preceding “the Spider-Verse”
- 15. “___ Language”, book by ___ feld
- 16. Vacation quarters
- 17. British flyer
- 19. Red or blue branded slushies
- 20. Year in Spain
- 21. Something to move when losing
- 23. Comic sound
- 25. Paper of indebtedness
- 27. Someone who spills tea
- 28. Sound of thinking
- 29. Nor. neighbour
- 30. Smoothly, as music
- 32. Words before “hurry” or “sec”
- 33. In trouble, as a soldier
- 36. Flax textile
- 38. Queen and Beatles record label
- 39. Fancy boat
- 43. Customers of universities
- 46. “This ___ robbery!”
- 47. The two major weed chemicals
- 50. It’s sold by the barrel
- 51. Blue and yellow bank

DOWN

- 52. “___-haw!”
- 53. Shocking Spider-Man villain
- 56. IV units
- 57. Fallacious vehicle
- 59. PC part that provides electricity
- 61. Irish folk hero Rory
- 62. Begged for forgiveness
- 66. Take in the pleasure
- 67. Proofreader’s job
- 68. Boat propellers
- 69. Angry rumble
- 70. Recreational projectile
- 71. Little shit

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